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Google

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## Introduction

In the year since this report was first issued in 2013, we've seen countless examples of creators and major rightsholders around the world benefiting from the web and online platforms. Some highlights from the past year have been:

- ✓ **Our Content ID system on YouTube, which identifies user-uploaded videos for rightsholders, won a Primetime Emmy in 2013 and has generated over a billion dollars for the content industry. Content ID now accounts for more than a third of YouTube's monetizable views. The majority of partners using Content ID choose to monetize their claims and many have seen significant increases in their revenue as a result.**
- ✓ **Fans from around the world come to YouTube to celebrate their favorite content. Whether it was Pharrell's "Happy" or "Let It Go" from Disney's movie Frozen, fan communities from around the world gave studios and record labels alike an incredible amount of promotion, resulting in longer stays at the box office and at the top of the charts.**
- ✓ **Artist and musician Lindsey Stirling told the story of her success on YouTube to the Washington Post, before her show at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. to celebrate YouTube's 9th birthday.<sup>1</sup> "YouTube really allows for artists to be leader of their careers," she said in her interview. "I started to put all my energy into learning to market yourself on YouTube [...] It was a very empowering feeling, because for the first time I could do what I wanted. And I could do it my own way."**

At the same time, Google has been participating in a number of workshops and conversations with policymakers and government agencies around the world aimed at fighting piracy online. In March of 2014, Google testified before the House Judiciary Committee on the DMCA notice-and-takedown process. In our testimony, we note our own experiences with the notice-and-takedown process, and highlight its importance in a developing media landscape where online platforms are creating more and more opportunities for creators every year.<sup>2</sup>

Now more than ever it's obvious that the Internet is a boon to creativity. More music, more video, more text, and more software is being created by more people in more places than ever before.<sup>3</sup> Every kind of creative endeavor, both amateur and professional, is being transformed by the new opportunities and lower costs made possible by digital tools and online distribution.

Nevertheless, online piracy still remains a challenge, and Google takes that challenge seriously. We develop and deploy anti-piracy solutions with the support of hundreds of Google employees. This regular report details those efforts, as well as how Google products and services create opportunity for creators around the world.

## Google's Anti-Piracy Principles

- ✓ **Create More and Better Legitimate Alternatives. The best way to battle piracy is with better, more convenient, legitimate alternatives to piracy. By developing products with beautiful user experiences, we help drive revenue for creative industries.**
- ✓ **Follow the Money. Rogue sites that specialize in online piracy are commercial ventures, which means the most effective way to combat them is to cut off their money supply. Google is a leader in rooting out and ejecting rogue sites from our advertising and payment services, and in raising standards across the industry.**

1 Washington Post, "YouTube sensation Lindsey Stirling on how the Internet can shape the music industry," May 2014 <<http://goo.gl/4aZV9I>>

2 Google, "Testimony of Katherine Oyama, Sr. Copyright Policy Counsel, Google Inc.," March 2014 <<http://goo.gl/iCLsnp>>

3 Techdirt, "The Sky is Rising," January 2012 <<http://goo.gl/eDN1n>>

- ✓ **Be Efficient, Effective, and Scalable.** Google strives to implement anti-piracy solutions that work. For example, beginning in 2010, Google has made substantial investments in streamlining the copyright removal process for search results. As a result, these improved procedures allow us to process copyright removal requests for search results at the rate of millions per week with an average turnaround time of less than 6 hours.
- ✓ **Guard Against Abuse.** Unfortunately, fabricated copyright infringement allegations can be used as a pretext for censorship and to hinder competition. Google is committed to ensuring that, even as we battle piracy online, we detect and reject bogus infringement allegations.
- ✓ **Provide Transparency.** We disclose the number of requests we receive from copyright owners and governments to remove information from our services.<sup>4</sup> We hope these steps toward greater transparency will inform ongoing discussions about content regulation online.

These principles guide the actions of Google employees, as well as our investment of tens of millions of dollars in new tools and systems to improve and expand our anti-piracy efforts. Some of the highlights, discussed in more detail in this report, include:



#### **YOUTUBE**

More than a million partner channels from more than 30 countries are earning money from their YouTube videos. More than 5,000 rightsholder partners use YouTube's content identification tool, Content ID, to manage their copyrights appearing within user-generated content on the site. These partners include network broadcasters, movie studios, songwriters, and record labels, and they are collectively making hundreds of millions of dollars a year by using YouTube's Content ID tools to monetize these videos.



#### **GOOGLE PLAY**

A digital storefront where people can buy millions of songs and books, thousands of movies and TV shows, and much more content. And Play offers a subscription service which gives people another way to access millions of songs across their devices for a monthly fee. For a monthly fee they can listen to millions of songs across their devices.



#### **GOOGLE SEARCH**

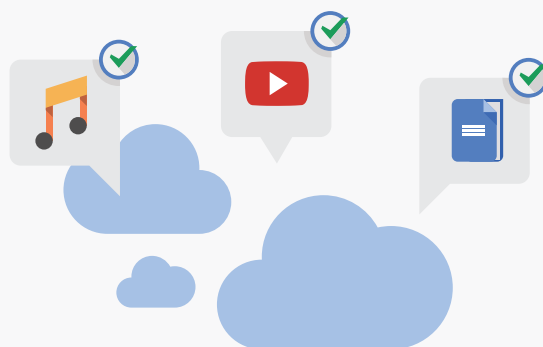
We process more takedown notices, and faster, than any other search engine. We receive notices for a tiny fraction of everything we host and index, which nonetheless amounts to millions of copyright removal requests per week that are processed, on average, in less than 6 hours.



#### **ADS**

Our policies prohibit infringing sites from using our advertising services. Since 2012, we have ejected more than 73,000 sites from our AdSense program, the vast majority of those caught by our own proactive screens.

<sup>4</sup> Google, "Transparency Report: Removal Requests," January 2013 <<http://goo.gl/jrQTj>>



## Better Legitimate Alternatives to Piracy

Piracy often arises when consumer demand goes unmet by legitimate supply. As services ranging from Netflix to Spotify to iTunes have demonstrated, the best way to combat piracy is with better and more convenient legitimate services. The right combination of price, convenience, and inventory will do far more to reduce piracy than enforcement can.

The music industry has demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach by licensing a variety of music services including free, advertising-supported streaming services (like Spotify and Pandora), download stores (like iTunes), and on-demand subscription products (like Google Play Music All Access). A survey released by the Swedish music industry showed that since 2009 the number of people who download music illegally in Sweden has decreased by more than 25 percent, largely as a result of greater availability of improved legal services such as Spotify.<sup>5</sup> Similar trends were seen in a 2013 survey from NPD Group.<sup>6</sup> And a recent study conducted by Spotify found that overall piracy rates in the Netherlands has declined dramatically thanks to the popularity of legitimate digital music services.<sup>7</sup> And at the 2014 Bigsound conference in Brisbane, Spotify shared data showing that torrent activity in Australia fell by more than 20% following their entry into that market.<sup>8</sup>

Signs have been positive that the creative industries are growing around the world, thanks in large part to digitization. IFPI reported that the recording industry grew its digital revenue by 4.3% in 2013, to \$5.9 billion.<sup>9</sup> Nielsen reported that, in 2013, the number of music streams in the U.S. alone grew by a whopping 32%.<sup>10</sup> A 2013 study by Booz & Co. in Europe found that digital media was driving growth in the European creative sector.<sup>11</sup>

Google has been at the forefront of creating new, authorized ways for consumers to obtain digital content. We build platforms where our users can legitimately purchase, consume, and discover entertainment and culture. We also pioneer innovative new approaches to monetizing online media.

<sup>5</sup> Mediavision, "Music Sweden File Sharing & Downloading," 2011 <<http://goo.gl/XTUVH>>

<sup>6</sup> NPD Group, "Music Filesharing declined Significantly in 2012," February 2012 <<http://goo.gl/apjVo>>

<sup>7</sup> Spotify, "New Spotify study sees encouraging downwards trend in music piracy in the Netherlands," July 2013 <<http://goo.gl/lmsYbB>>

<sup>8</sup> Billboard, "Streaming Services Make Inroads Into Piracy Down Under, Spotify's Will Page Tells Bigsound" September 2014 <<http://goo.gl/UGstju>>

<sup>9</sup> IFPI, "IFPI Digital Music Report: 2014," March 2014 <<http://goo.gl/DcPw52>>

<sup>10</sup> Nielsen, "U.S. Music Industry Year-End Review: 2013," January 2014 <<http://goo.gl/ukgtU0>>

<sup>11</sup> Booz & Co., "The Digital Future of Creative Europe: The Economic Impact of Digitization and the Internet on the Creative Sector in Europe," March 2013 <<http://goo.gl/35tm0f>>

## YouTube Partners

YouTube's community includes not only a billion individual users every month, but also more than a million partner channels from over thirty countries that earn money from their YouTube videos—from independent musicians and creators to some of the world's biggest record labels, movie studios, and news organizations. YouTube has developed a series of tools and programs to help our content partners thrive, including partnerships with every major record label, as well as hundreds of collecting societies, independent labels, and music publishers to license recorded music on the site. As a result of partnerships like these, YouTube generates hundreds of millions of dollars each year for the content industry.

From musicians to athletes, teachers to comedians, more than a million video creators are now part of the Partner Program established by YouTube in 2007. Many thousands of them are earning six-figure incomes from their YouTube channels. To further invest in this creative community, we have opened facilities like the new collaborative spaces in LA, London, Tokyo, and soon in New York as places for partners to shoot, edit and create their content for free. These facilities support the creative industry in developing and monetizing their work through partner channels on YouTube.



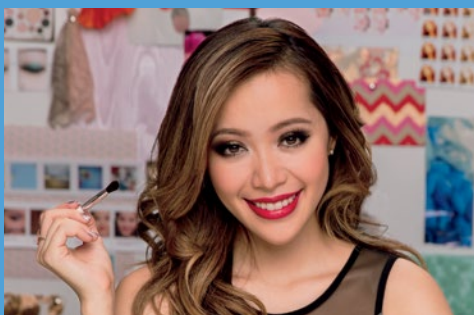
Photos of the YouTube Space in Los Angeles. For more information, visit [youtube.com/yt/space](http://youtube.com/yt/space).

Rentals are another option for content partners. Thanks to our partnerships with content creators, YouTube offers tens of thousands of movies and TV episodes to rent at standard industry pricing.

## YOUTUBE CREATOR CASE STUDIES

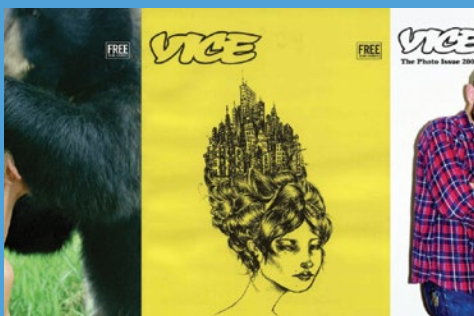
One of the most inspiring things about YouTube is the way people around the world use it to express their passion and creativity—and to turn it into a career. Thousands of channels are now generating six-figure revenue through the YouTube Partner Program, and there are more than one million channels earning revenue.

Below are just a few recent examples of creators succeeding on YouTube:



### Michelle Phan

Michelle Phan was one of the earliest YouTube adopters to share beauty tutorials. Over the past seven years, she has uploaded more than 300 videos that have positioned her as a how-to influencer, with more than 6 million subscribers and almost 1 billion video views.



### VICE

VICE is known for its bold explorations of “uncomfortable truths” and “going to places they don’t belong,” partly due to the controversial videos on its YouTube channel. Today they have millions of subscribers.



### Epic Rap Battles

Great content is at the heart of any successful YouTube channel strategy and Epic Rap Battles, with its unique blend of history, comedy and music content, nails it. The channel has garnered more than 1 billion lifetime views and 10 million total subscribers. Epic Rap Battles rakes in an average of 37 million views per rap battle video.



Thanks to the popularity of music videos and YouTube's agreements with record labels and music publishers to feature them, YouTube has become an important destination for music. So much so that, as of February 2013, Billboard magazine's Hot 100 chart now incorporates YouTube views when ranking a song's popularity. The 2013 Digital Music Report from IFPI<sup>12</sup>, an international association representing the recording industry, concluded that 90% of Internet users are aware of YouTube, and that the service attracts a large global audience. And YouTube has sent more than a billion dollars to the music industry in the last few years.

Each time a music fan chooses YouTube over an unauthorized source for music, it's a victory against piracy—unlike previous generations of music fans who were raised on unauthorized sources for music, today's young fans have YouTube as a legal, compelling way to experience music online. And because of our licensing agreements with our partners in the music industry, rightsholders are compensated when fans visit YouTube to experience music videos.

## Google Play

There are more than a billion active Android users around the world, presenting a tremendous opportunity to creative industries. Google Play is a service that helps rightsholders and creators sell their applications or content directly to Google users, particularly on Android. It's a digital store where people can find, purchase and enjoy entertainment for their devices—from computers to tablets to smartphones. We've partnered with all of the major record labels, publishers, and movie studios to offer millions of songs and books, thousands of movies and TV shows, and hundreds of magazines that can be enjoyed across devices. Google Play has expanded rapidly into new countries in the last year: Play Music is available in 45 countries, Play Movies in more than 93 countries, and Play Books in 57 countries.

## MUSIC

Google Play offers users a store where they can purchase new music, a music locker to store existing collections of songs, and a subscription service to access millions of songs from the Google Play collection. Today there are millions of songs available for purchase from Google Play. Google also has "scan-and-match" licenses that enable users to access their personal music collections from any connected device, without the time-consuming process of uploading those files. Our music subscription service lets users listen to millions of songs on-demand for a monthly fee.

These products are driving revenue for the music industry. And thanks to our partnerships with rightsholders around the world, Google Play Music is available to a global audience

12 IFPI, "IFPI Digital Music Report 2013," 2013 <<http://goo.gl/DsZ3p>>



## **MOVIES AND TV SHOWS**

Google Play has partnered with all of the major film studios in the U.S. and many local studios overseas to offer thousands of movies and TV shows for rental or purchase, many before Netflix and home release. We also offer innovative features that take advantage of a digital format to drive user engagement, such as Info Cards that appear when a movie or TV show is paused and give more information about the actors and music in a scene.

## **BOOKS AND MAGAZINES**

Google Play is home to the world's largest selection of eBooks – with more than 5 million titles available. More than 48,000 publishers have joined the Partner Program to promote their books online, including nearly every major U.S. publisher. We have also partnered with major publishers to make more than 2,000 news sources available across newspapers, magazines, blogs and news sites, including the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Financial Times, Vanity Fair, NPR, and many more, creating a new market for magazines and newspapers. Users are able to access their books, magazines, and newspapers on any of their devices.

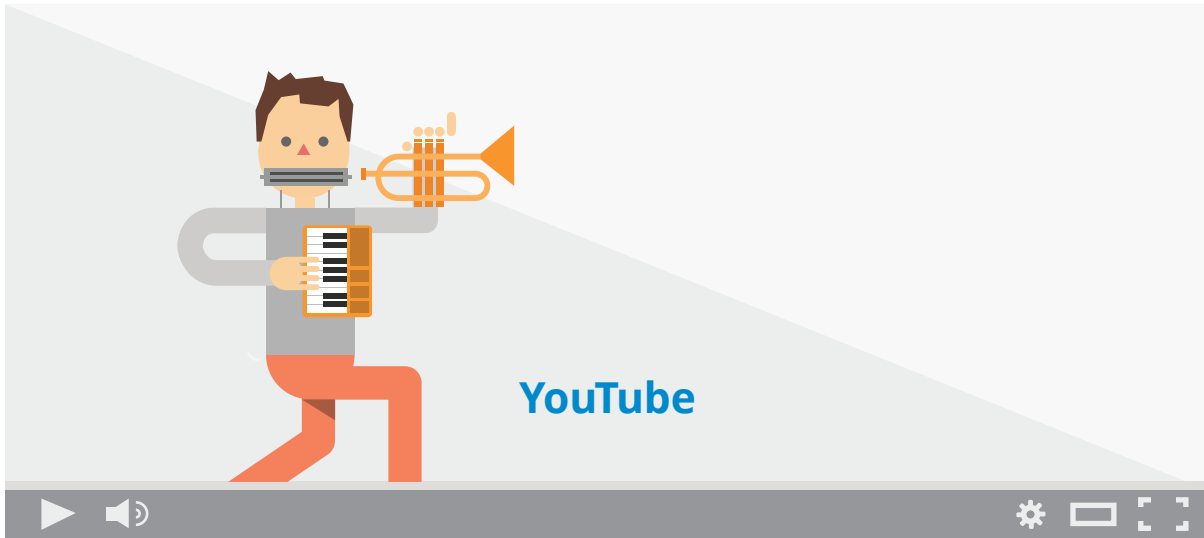
## **APPS AND GAMES**

Google Play is an engine of economic opportunity for application developers because it gives them a free platform to build on and reach millions of users. More than a million apps and games are available for sale or for free on Google Play, and they've been downloaded over 50 billion times.

Several of the most popular apps are delivering licensed music, movies, and TV shows to users.

- ✓ **Netflix, which launched on Android in 2011, allows subscribers to stream TV and movies.**
- ✓ **Pandora creates personalized music stations and streams songs directly to users.**
- ✓ **Spotify is a subscription music services that offers both free, ad-supported access, as well as subscription access, to a catalog of licensed music.**

We also launched Google Play Games, an app that makes it easy to discover new games, track achievements and scores, and play games with friends around the world. Google Play is an opportunity for game developers to showcase their creativity and sell their apps directly to gamers. Google Play Games is the fastest growing mobile game network of all time. Three out of every four Android users play games.



More than one billion unique users visit YouTube each month and together watch more than six billion hours of video. And more than 100 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute, spanning every conceivable topic from politics to comedy, from daredevil sports to religion. YouTube has been a transformational force in the world of creative expression, a global video platform at a scale never imagined.

YouTube's popularity translates into creator success. For example, over the past few years we've paid out over a billion dollars to the music industry alone, and thousands of partner channels are now earning more than a hundred thousand dollars a year. As we explain below, much of this growth is due to the investments we've made in technologies that help rightsholders and creators find and monetize their content on the platform.

## Content ID: A Win-Win Solution

Beginning in 2007, YouTube developed and launched the most advanced content identification system in the world, called Content ID. With this system, rightsholders are able to identify user-uploaded videos that are entirely or partially their content, and choose, in advance, what they want to happen when those videos are found.

This is how it works: Rightsholders deliver YouTube reference files (audio-only or video) of content they own, metadata describing that content, and policies describing what they want YouTube to do when it finds a match. YouTube compares videos uploaded to the site against those reference files. Our technology automatically identifies the content and applies the rightsholder's preferred policy.

Rightsholders can choose between three policies when an upload matches their content: 1) make money from it; 2) leave it up and track viewing statistics; or 3) block it from YouTube altogether.

Thanks to the options that Content ID gives to copyright owners, it's not just an anti-piracy solution, but also a new business model for copyright owners and YouTube alike. The majority of partners using Content ID choose to monetize their claims and many have seen significant increases in revenue as a result. Content ID has generated more than a billion dollars for the content industry.

Content ID is good for users as well. When copyright owners choose to monetize or track user-submitted videos, it allows users to continue to freely remix and upload a wide variety of new creations using existing works.

## CONTENT ID STATS

More than

**5,000 partners**

use Content ID, including major U.S. network broadcasters, movie studios and record labels.

Content ID scans over

**400 years**

of video every day.

More than

**300 million videos**

have been claimed with the help of Content ID.

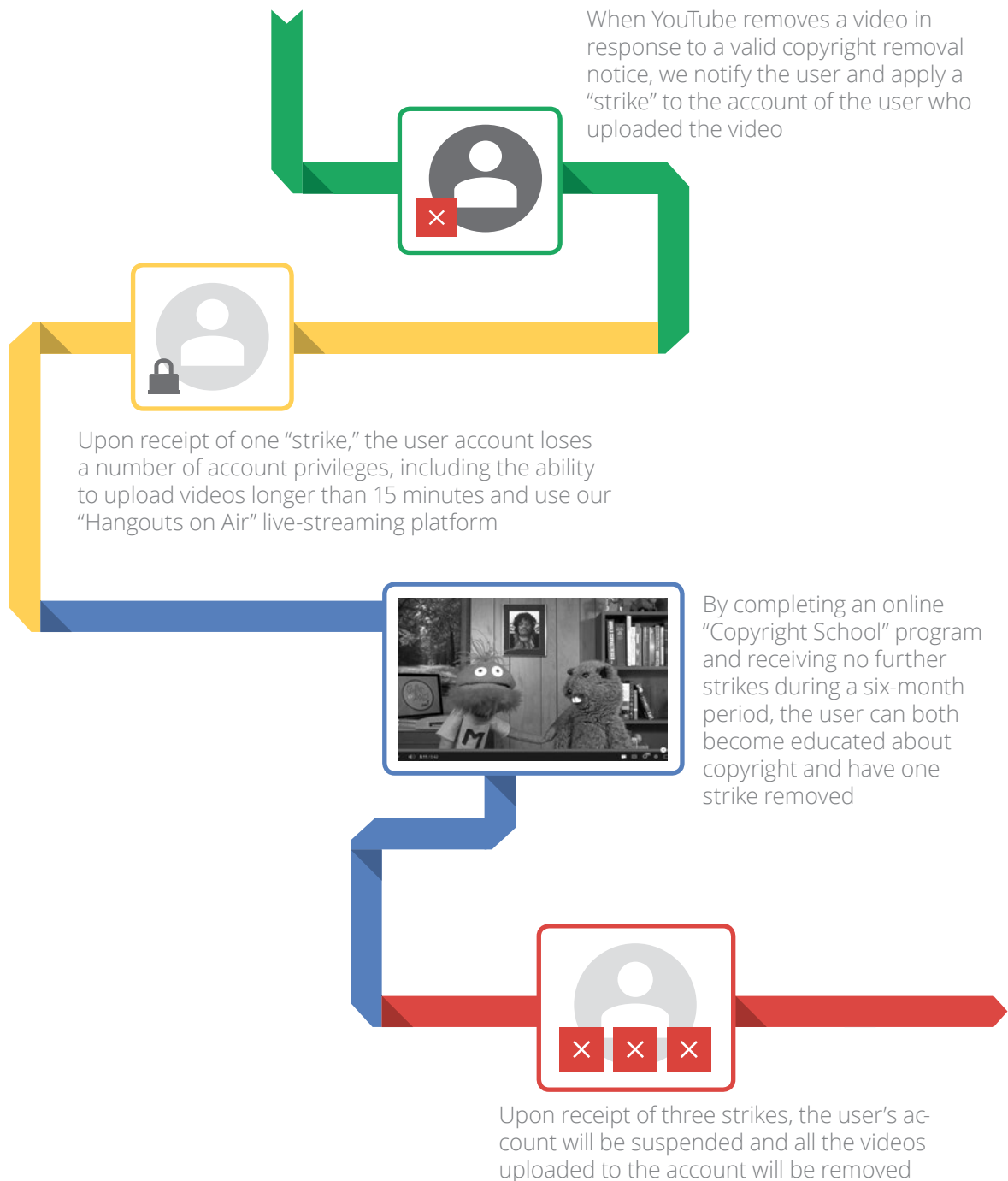
We have more than

**25 million active reference files**

In the Content ID database; that's over 1.5 million hours of material.

## YouTube Copyright Policies

The vast majority of the 100 hours of video uploaded to YouTube every minute do not infringe anyone's copyright. Nevertheless, YouTube takes seriously its role in educating YouTube users about copyright and creating strong incentives to discourage infringing activity. As a result, YouTube has a number of policies in place designed to discourage copyright infringement and terminate repeat offenders. For example:



## The YouTube Copyright Center

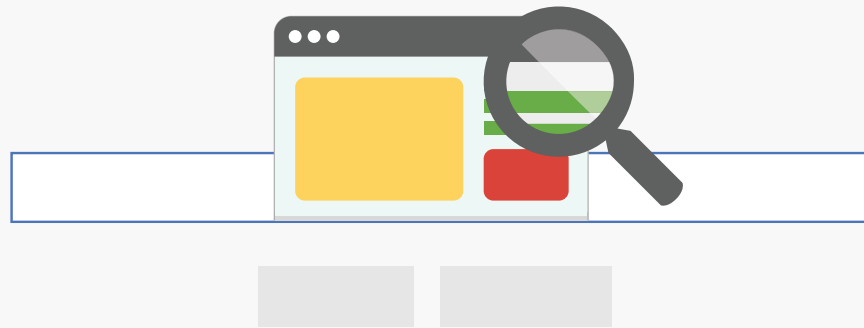
In addition to the Content ID system, copyright owners and their representatives can submit copyright removal notices through the YouTube Copyright Center, which offers an easy-to-use web form, as well as extensive information aimed at educating YouTube users about copyright. The Copyright Center also offers YouTube users a web form for “counter-noticing” copyright infringement notices that they believe are misguided or abusive.



Glove and Boots explains copyright in the YouTube Copyright Center: [youtube.com/yt/copyright/](https://www.youtube.com/yt/copyright/).

## YouTube Content Verification Program

YouTube offers a Content Verification Program for rightsholders who have a regular need to submit high volumes of copyright removal notices and have demonstrated high accuracy in their prior submissions. This program makes it easier for rightsholders to search YouTube for material that they believe to be infringing, quickly identify infringing videos, and provide YouTube with information sufficient to permit us to locate and remove that material, all in a streamlined manner that makes the process more efficient.



## Google Web Search

There are more than 60 trillion addresses on the web. Only an infinitesimal portion of those trillions infringe copyright, and those infringing pages cannot be identified by Google without the cooperation of rightsholders. Nearly every paragraph of text, photograph, video, sound recording, or piece of software is potentially protected by copyright law. Moreover, copyright laws generally permit some uses, such as parodies and quotation, even over a copyright owner's objection. So while we don't want to include links to infringing pages in our search results, Google needs the cooperation of copyright owners to separate the authorized or unobjectionable uses from infringing ones.

Google relies on copyright owners to notify us when they discover that a search result infringes their rights and should be removed. These notices are submitted through procedures that are consistent with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) and similar laws that apply to providers of online services.<sup>13</sup>

To help copyright owners submit these notices, Google has developed a streamlined submission process. There is no search engine that processes as many copyright removal notices as Google does, and none that process them more quickly. For example:

- ✓ **In 2013 we received just over 224 million DMCA requests for Google Search results.**
- ✓ **We ultimately removed 222M, which means we rejected or reinstated less than 1% after review because we either needed additional information, were unable to find the page, or concluded that the material was not infringing; and**
- ✓ **Our average turnaround time for copyright notices remains less than 6 hours.**


In addition, Google incorporates the number of valid copyright removal notices we receive for any given site as a signal in our ranking algorithm, as described below.

<sup>13</sup> The DMCA is a U.S. law that provides qualifying online service providers like Google with a safe harbor from monetary liability for copyright infringement claims. One of the requirements of these safe harbor provisions is that the service provider (Google, in this case) remove or disable access to allegedly infringing material upon receiving a request that meets certain requirements. Laws governing other jurisdictions, such as Europe's E-Commerce Directive, have similar requirements for service providers.


## Submitting Removal Notices

The fastest and most efficient way to submit a copyright removal notice to Google is through our content removal web form, which accepts many different kinds of removals requests, including copyright requests. The information we request in our web form is consistent with the DMCA and similar laws, and provides a simple and efficient mechanism for copyright owners from countries around the world. Since 2012, more than 35,000 different entities have submitted requests to remove URLs from search results for copyright violations.

In addition to the public content removal web form for copyright owners who have a proven track record of submitting accurate notices and who have a consistent need to submit thousands of URLs each day, Google created the Trusted Copyright Removal Program for Web Search (TCRP). This program streamlines the submission process, allowing copyright owners or their enforcement agents to submit large volumes of URLs on a consistent basis. There are now more than 80 TCRP partners, who together submit the vast majority of notices every year.



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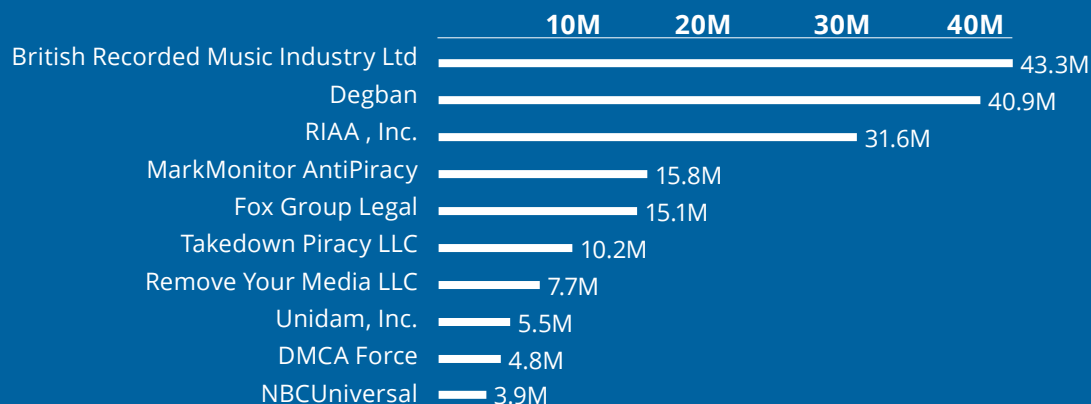
## REMOVAL REQUESTS FOR SEARCH SKYROCKET

Since launching new submission tools for copyright owners and their agents in 2011, we have seen remarkable growth in the number of pages that copyright owners have asked us to remove from search results. In fact, today we receive removal requests for more URLs every week than we did in the twelve years from 1998 to 2010 combined. At the same time, Google is processing the notices we receive for Search faster than ever before—currently, on average, in less than six hours.

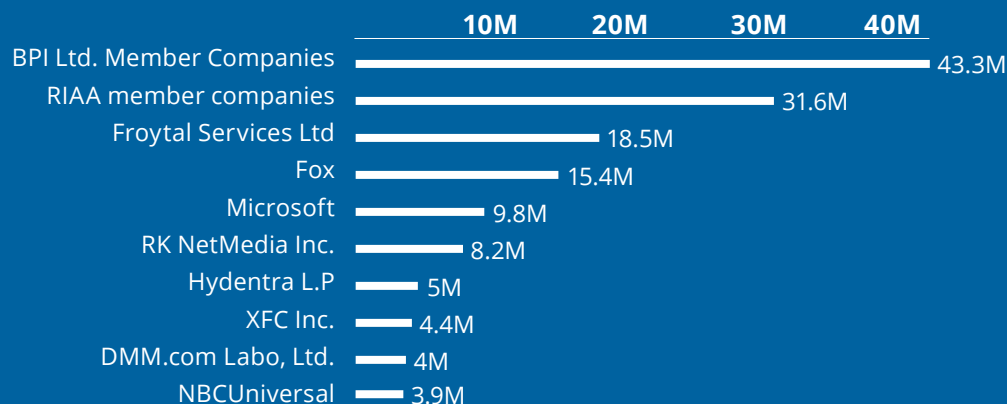
Google has a strong track record of developing solutions that scale efficiently. The trend line is striking—from more than three million pages for all of 2011 to millions of pages per week today. As the numbers continue to swell, it becomes both more difficult and more important to detect and pick out the abusive and erroneous removal notices.

Google has never charged copyright owners for providing these services, and we will continue to invest substantial resources and engineering effort into improving our procedures for receiving and processing copyright removal notices.

### Top 10 Reporting Organizations in 2013



### Top 10 Copyright Owners in 2013



## Transparency

When we remove material from search results, we believe users and the public should be able to see who made the removal request and why. Because copyright infringement allegations are the basis for the vast majority of the legal requests that we receive to remove items from search results, we have taken the following steps to ensure transparency:

- ✓ **Maintaining the Google Transparency Report.** In 2012, we added details regarding copyright removal notices to our Transparency Report site.<sup>14</sup> Updated daily, the site shows the aggregate number of URLs that we have been asked to remove, as well as who submitted the notices, on behalf of which copyright owners, and for which websites.
- ✓ **Notifying webmasters of removals.** If a website operator uses Google's Webmaster Tools, notification will be provided to webmasters there when a web page in their domain has received a takedown notice.<sup>15</sup>
- ✓ **Informing users when results have been removed from their search results.** When users perform a search where results have been removed due to a copyright complaint, Google displays the following notice:

*In response to a complaint we received under the [US Digital Millennium Copyright Act](#), we have removed 1 result(s) from this page. If you wish, you may [read the DMCA complaint](#) that caused the removal(s) at [ChillingEffects.org](#).*

- ✓ **Providing copies of notices to Chilling Effects.** Since 2002, Google has provided a copy of each copyright removal notice that we receive for search results to the nonprofit organization Chilling Effects. By gathering together copyright removal notices from a number of sources, including Google and Twitter, Chilling Effects fosters research and examination of removal notices submitted by copyright owners.<sup>16</sup>

## Detecting and Preventing Abuse

Google works hard to detect and prevent abuses of the copyright removal process. From time to time, we may receive inaccurate or unjustified copyright removal requests for search results that clearly do not link to infringing content.

<sup>14</sup> Google, "Transparency Report: Removal Requests," January 2013 < <http://goo.gl/jrQTj> >

<sup>15</sup> Google, "Webmaster Tools" 2013 <<http://goo.gl/jxSTF>>

<sup>16</sup> Chilling Effects, "Legal Scholarship Using Chilling Effects," December 2010 <<http://goo.gl/Xez14>>

## EXAMPLES OF DMCA ABUSE

Here are a few examples of requests that have been submitted through our copyright removals process that were clearly invalid copyright removal requests. In each case, we did not remove the URL in question from search results:

- A major U.S. motion picture studio requested removal of the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) page for a movie released by its own studio, as well as the official trailer posted on a major authorized online media service.
- A U.S. reporting organization working on behalf of a major movie studio twice requested removal of a movie review on a major newspaper website.
- A driving school in the U.K. requested the removal of a competitor's homepage from Google Search, on the grounds that the competitor had copied an alphabetized list of cities and regions where instruction was offered.
- A content protection organization acting on behalf of motion picture, record, and sports programming companies requested the removal of search results that linked only to copyright removal requests on Chilling Effects that had originally been submitted by one of its clients.
- An individual in the U.S. requested the removal of search results that link to court proceedings referencing her first and last name on the ground that her name was copyrightable.
- Multiple individuals in the U.S. requested the removal of search results linking to blog posts and web forums that associated their names with certain allegations, locations, dates, or negative comments.
- A company in the U.S. requested the removal of search results that link to an employee's blog posts about unjust and unfair treatment.

In 2012, we terminated two partners from the Trusted Copyright Removal Program for Web Search for repeatedly sending inaccurate notices through our high-volume submission mechanisms. Because the TCRP is reserved for partners with a track record of submitting accurate notices, access to the program can be revoked where a partner falls short of these high standards.


As the volume of removal notices continues to rise, detecting inaccurate or abusive notices continues to pose a challenge. Google invests continuously in engineering and other solutions to address this. The Transparency Report has also proven useful in detecting abusive notices, as journalists, webmasters, and other interested members of the public have examined the data made available there.

Webmasters may also submit a counter-notice if they determine that a page on their site has been removed from Google Search results due to an erroneous copyright removal notice. Google affords webmasters two ways to be notified if any pages on their sites are targeted by removal notices. First, if the site operator uses Google's Webmaster Tools, notification will be provided to webmasters there. Second, the Transparency Report shows copyright removal notices received for a domain.


## Using Copyright Removal Notices in Ranking

In addition to removing pages from search results when notified by copyright owners, Google also factors in the number of valid copyright removal notices we receive for any given site as one signal among the hundreds that we take into account when ranking search results. Consequently, sites with high numbers of removal notices may appear lower in search results. This ranking change helps users find legitimate, quality sources of content more easily.

While we use the number of valid copyright removal notices as a signal for ranking purposes, we do not remove pages from results unless we receive a specific removal request for the page. Even for the websites that have received the highest numbers of notices, the number of noticed pages is typically only a tiny fraction of the total number of pages on the site. It would be inappropriate to remove entire sites under these circumstances.



**Sites with high numbers of removal notices may appear lower in search results.**



In October 2014, we have improved and refined the DMCA demotion signal in search results, increasing the effectiveness of just one tool rightsholders have at their disposal. As outlined earlier in this report, rightsholders made good use of our removals process to target sites that they have not authorized to distribute content and have sent us hundreds of millions of removal requests over the last year.

## SEARCH AND PIRACY: THE REALITY

In reflecting on the role search engines can play in addressing the problem of piracy, commentators often overlook some important realities:

### 1. Search is not a major driver of traffic to pirate sites.

Google Search is not how music, movie, and TV fans intent on pirating media find pirate sites. All traffic from major search engines (Yahoo, Bing, and Google combined) accounts for less than 16% of traffic to sites like The Pirate Bay.<sup>17</sup> In fact, several notorious sites have said publicly that they don't need search engines, as their users find them through social networks, word of mouth, and other mechanisms.<sup>18</sup> Research that Google co-sponsored with PRS for Music in the UK further confirmed that traffic from search engines is not what keeps these sites in business.<sup>19</sup> These findings were confirmed in a recent research paper published by the Computer & Communications Industry Association.<sup>20</sup>

### 2. Search can't eradicate pirate sites.

Search engines do not control what content is on the Web. There are more than 60 trillion web addresses on the Internet, and there will always be new sites dedicated to making copyrighted works available, as long as there is money to be made doing so. According to recent research, replicating these sites is easy and inexpensive, and attempts to make them disappear should focus on eradicating the business model that supports them.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. Volume of allegedly 'piracy-related' queries is dwarfed by broader queries.

When it comes to building anti-piracy measures, we prioritize efforts where they can make the most difference. Google Search receives more than three billion queries each day. We want to focus our efforts where the users are.

The good news is that the most popular queries relating to movies, music, books, video games, and other copyrighted works return results that do not include links to infringing materials. This is thanks to both our constant improvements to the algorithms that power Google Search, and the efforts of rightsholders to prioritize and target their copyright removal notices.

So when some critics focus on infringing materials appearing in search results for particular queries, it is important to consider how many users actually make those queries. During the first six months of 2013, Google users searched for<sup>22</sup>:

<p>"carly rae jepsen call me maybe"</p> <p><b>16 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"carly rae jepsen call me maybe mp3"</p>	<p>"flo rida whistle"</p> <p><b>30 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"flo rida whistle download"</p>
<p>"game of thrones"</p> <p><b>200 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"game of thrones download"</p>	<p>"django unchained"</p> <p><b>1,000 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"django unchained free download"</p>
<p>"30 rock"</p> <p><b>5,000 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"30 rock free stream"</p>	<p>"katy perry"</p> <p><b>200,000 TIMES MORE OFTEN THAN</b></p> <p>"free katy perry mp3"</p>

17 Study on file with author, NERA Economic Consulting. A secondary analysis published by TechDirt, <http://goo.gl/XESoa>

18 TorrentFreak, "Pirate Bay and isoHunt Respond to Google Search Result Punishment," August 2012 <<http://goo.gl/DUQ0F>>

19 BAE Systems Detica, "The Six Business Models for Copyright Infringement," June 2012 <<http://goo.gl/tylZd>>

20 CCIA, "The Search Fixation: Infringement, Search Results, and Online Content," 2013 <<http://goo.gl/zIM5LF>>

21 Northeastern University, "Clickonomics: Determining the Effect of Anti-Piracy Measures for One-Click Hosting," 2013 <<http://goo.gl/Y3wST>>

22 These queries were raised by RIAA and MovieLabs in discussions with Google.

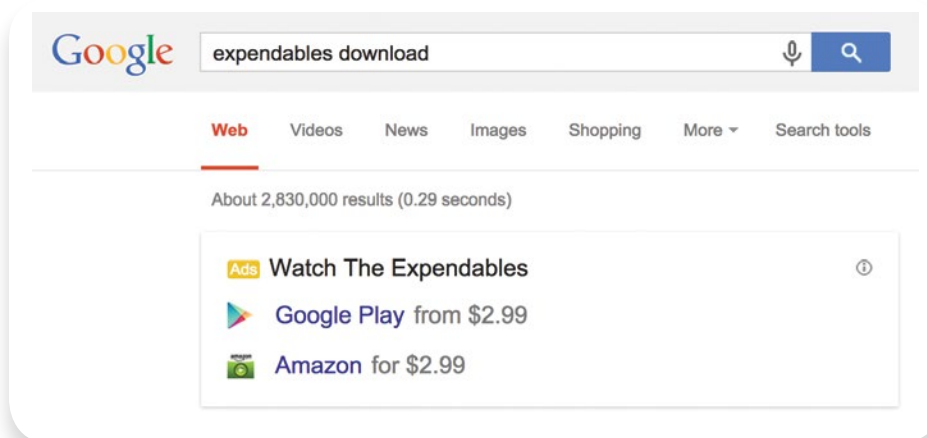
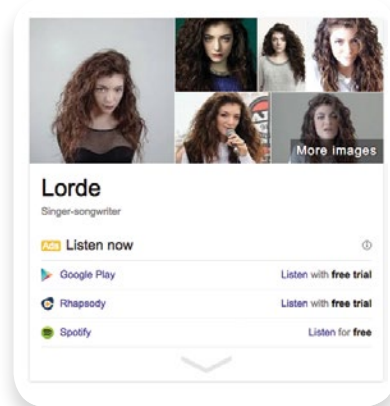
## Removing Terms Associated with Piracy from Autocomplete and Related Search

Autocomplete is a convenience feature in Google Search that attempts to “complete” a query as it’s typed based on similar queries that other users have typed. Related Search shows queries that other users have typed that may be similar to yours. Google has taken steps to prevent terms closely associated with piracy from appearing in Autocomplete and Related Search.

## Making Legitimate Alternatives More Visible

In addition to removing infringing pages from search results and using valid removal notices as a ranking signal, Google has a number of new advertising products which further promote authorized sources of content in Search results.

- ✓ **Ads in the right-hand panel.** Searches for movies, musicians, albums, etc. on Google will often return a panel on the right-hand side of the search results. These provide users with facts, images and quick answers to their queries. Within these panels, we’ve been testing new ways for advertisers to quickly enable users to watch or listen to content online. For example, a query for the artist “Lorde” on a desktop will display a panel for the band on the right-hand side of the page. Within that panel we may show “Listen now” links from advertisers like Spotify or Beats Music.
- ✓ **Ads on “long tail” consumption-focused queries.** When users search with the intention to consume media, we may show new ad formats on those queries directing users to legitimate sources. For example, the query “expendables download” returns an ad format at the top of the page advertising Google Play, Vudu, and Amazon.<sup>23</sup> The same ad format triggers on queries for queries like “expendables torrent”. While relatively few users search in this way compared to root queries like “expendables”, we are happy that these new ad formats are driving traffic to legitimate sources of media.



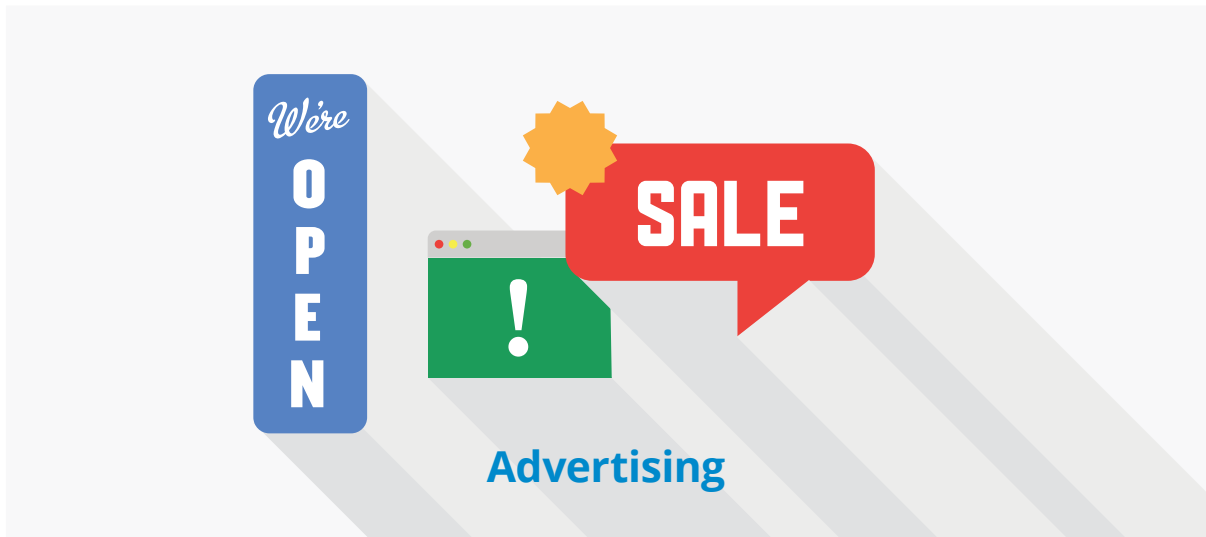
<sup>23</sup> At the time of publication.

There is more that authorized music, TV, and movie sites can do to help their sites be more effectively indexed by search engines. The film and television industry has launched wheretowatch.org, and the music industry has launched whymusicmatters.com to help consumers find legitimate channels for buying films, TV shows, and songs. And the Music Business Association has recently offered advice to online music retailers on optimizing their sites for better performance in search engine results.<sup>24</sup> But these industries could do even more to build album-, movie- and TV show-specific pages that could then surface in search engine results.

Indexing subscription music and video services is also a challenge for search engines. It is difficult for a search engine to return results from licensed services like Spotify or Netflix if it doesn't know what songs and programs are available from those services. With more information, search engines could return better, more relevant legitimate results to users seeking the content. Google looks forward to continuing collaborative efforts with content owners and authorized services, intended to make the offerings of authorized services more visible in search results.

<sup>24</sup> Music Business Association, "INFOGRAPHIC: Search Engine Optimization for Music Websites," May 2014 <<http://goo.gl/AYaL1t>>





## Following the Money

The most effective way to combat rogue sites that specialize in online piracy is to cut off their money supply. These sites are almost exclusively for-profit enterprises, and so long as there is money to be made by their operators, other anti-piracy strategies will be far less effective. As a global leader in online advertising, Google is committed to rooting out and ejecting rogue sites from our advertising services. We are also working with other leaders in the industry to craft best practices aimed at raising standards across the entire online advertising industry.

## Best Practices

In April 2011, Google was among the first companies to certify compliance in the Interactive Advertising Bureau's (IAB's) Quality Assurance Certification program, through which participating advertising companies will take steps to enhance buyer control over the placement and context of advertising and build brand safety.<sup>25</sup> This program will help ensure that advertisers and their agents are able to control where their ads appear across the web.

In July 2013, Google worked with the White House's Office of the U.S. Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator (IPEC) and other leading ad networks to participate in Best Practices and Guidelines for Ad Networks to Address Piracy and Counterfeiting.<sup>26</sup> Under these best practices, ad networks will maintain and post policies prohibiting websites that are principally dedicated to engaging in copyright piracy from participating in the ad network's advertising programs. By working across the industry, these best practices should help reduce the financial incentives for pirate sites by cutting off their revenue supply while maintaining a healthy Internet and promoting innovation.

<sup>25</sup> IAB, "Quality Assurance Guidelines," November 2011 <<http://goo.gl/BfOny>>

<sup>26</sup> The White House, "Coming Together to Combat Online Piracy and Counterfeiting," July 2013 <<http://goo.gl/86x1QE>>

## AdSense

More than two million web publishers use AdSense to make money from their content on the web, making it the chief Google advertising product used by online publishers. The overwhelming majority of those publishers are not engaged in any kind of copyright infringement. AdSense has always prohibited publishers from using AdSense to place ads on pages that contain pirated content, and Google proactively monitors the AdSense network to root out bad publishers.

Since 2012, we have ejected more than 73,000 sites from our AdSense program, the vast majority of those caught by our own proactive screens. Almost all AdSense ad formats include a link that permits a copyright owner to report sites that are violating Google's policies. Copyright owners may also notify us of violations through a web form.

### Please provide us with more details

**Violating URL: \***  
Format: <http://www.SiteURL.com> or <http://www.SiteURL.com/page.html>  
Please submit only one violating URL in the field below. Additional example URLs may be included in the "Violation Details" field at the end of this form.

**Please select the type of media on which you saw the violation \***

☐ website

☐ mobile website

☐ video

☐ feed

Each time we receive a valid copyright removal notice for Search, we also blacklist that page from receiving any AdSense advertising in the future.

Google does not want to be in business with rogue sites specializing in piracy. Thanks to our ongoing efforts, we are succeeding in detecting and ejecting these sites from AdSense. While a rogue site might occasionally slip through the cracks, the data suggests that these sites are a vanishingly small part of the AdSense network. For example, we find that AdSense ads appear on far fewer than 1% of the pages that copyright owners identify in copyright removal notices for Search.

## DoubleClick

DoubleClick offers a suite of online advertising platform solutions for both advertisers and web publishers. The principal customers for DoubleClick services are large advertisers, ad agencies, large publishers, and ad networks. It is virtually unheard of for these sorts of commercial entities to be operating rogue sites specializing in copyright infringement.

DoubleClick also offers a free service to smaller web publishers on a self-service basis through the DoubleClick for Publishers (DFP) Small Business program. Although the program has policies in place to prohibit its use in connection with infringing activity, rogue publishers have tried to sneak in through this door. Publishers do not pay Google to use this platform, nor does Google pay them for using it. Nevertheless, Google has revised its policies and stepped up enforcement efforts for DoubleClick for Publishers Small Business in an effort to deny rogue sites access to the service as a platform for serving ads sourced from other networks. AdWords

AdWords is Google's premier advertising product, responsible for the advertisements that appear next to Google search results, as well as the text advertisements on sites across the web. Advertisers pay Google for these placements, generally on a cost-per-impression or cost-per-click basis.

Rogue sites specializing in online piracy generally do not use AdWords. Google receives very few complaints regarding AdWords being used by rogue pirate sites. Nevertheless, we maintain strict policies forbidding the use of AdWords to promote copyright infringement. We take a variety of proactive and reactive steps, through both manual and automated review, to enforce our policies.

## BLOGGER

Blogger is Google's free blog publishing platform, which enables users to create and update blogs. We remain vigilant against use of the Blogger platform by pirates looking to set up a free website. Consistent with other Google products that host user-uploaded content, we will remove infringing blog posts when properly notified by a copyright owner, and will terminate the entire blog where multiple complaints establish it as a repeat infringer.

We have also created an automated bulk submission tool for copyright owners who have a track record of reliable submissions and a regular need to submit large volumes of takedown notices. This tool allows qualified copyright owners to obtain rapid removals of infringing posts appearing on Blogger.

## GOOGLE'S ANTI-PIRACY PRINCIPLES

**Create More and Better Legitimate Alternatives.** The best way to battle piracy is with better, more convenient, legitimate alternatives to piracy. By developing licensed products with beautiful user experiences, we help drive revenue for creative industries.

**Follow the Money.** Rogue sites that specialize in online piracy are commercial ventures, which means the most effective way to combat them is to cut off their money supply. Google is a leader in rooting out and ejecting rogue sites from our advertising and payment services, and are raising standards across the industry.

**Be Efficient, Effective, and Scalable.** Google strives to implement anti-piracy solutions that work. For example, beginning in 2010, Google has made substantial investments in streamlining the copyright removal process for search results. As a result these improved procedures allow us to process copyright removal requests for search results at the rate of four million requests per week with an average turnaround time of less than six hours.

**Guard Against Abuse.** Unfortunately, fabricated copyright infringement allegations can be used as a pretext for censorship and to hinder competition. Google is committed to ensuring that, even as we battle piracy online, we detect and reject bogus infringement allegations, such as removals for political or competitive reasons.

**Provide Transparency.** We disclose the number of requests we receive from copyright owners and governments to remove information from our services. We hope these steps toward greater transparency will inform ongoing discussions about content regulation online.

